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A 'suspicious' travel history can hurt you

Question: *I travelled last year to the United States and spent 3 months and a couple of weeks over the summer. I was questioned very hard at the Miami Dade International Airport about the reason for my trip, given that I have been travelling to the United States since 2010 as a Work and Travel Student, working every summer while in University. The questions surrounded the fact that I always traveled during May or June on the J1 visa, but that time I was going on a B1/B2. The immigration officer kept on asking if I was going to work and I told him no, since I knew that it was illegal to work on a B1/B2 visa. I want to make another trip staying 6 weeks this year, but I am very afraid that my visa may be revoked or that I may be sent back on the same plane the next day. Is it possible to make the trip?*

As long as your visa is valid, and you intend to travel temporarily for business or pleasure, your visa allows you to travel to a port of entry (usually an airport). However, the visa is not a guarantee that the immigration officer will admit you to the U.S. It is possible that a suspicious travel history, such as long, regular stays, or travel that matches a pattern of working in the U.S. could raise questions at the port of entry.

If you feel like your travel history might raise questions at the border, be prepared to explain what you were doing in the U.S. on your last trip, how you supported yourself financially in the U.S. without working, and what your travel plans are for this trip. If you have documentation that can help the officer at the airport understand your past and present travel, you might want to bring it as well. Also be prepared to answer questions about your ties to Jamaica that would keep you from staying too long in the U.S.

In short, if you can demonstrate to the officer at the port of entry that you travelled well in the past and you intend to travel well in the future, it is unlikely that you will have any major problems on your next vacation.

You can find more information about how to travel to the U.S. on our website, www.kingston.usembassy.gov. Keep on top of Embassy news on our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Embassy-Jamaica> and by following USEmbassyJA on Twitter. We also answer general visa questions on our Facebook and Twitter pages.